

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



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DECISION MEMO ACTIONS OF A SPECIAL NATURE

McCone Conservation District Administrative Grant
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022
McCone Conservation District
Administrative
Circle, MT
McCone County

PURPOSE AND NEED

The McCone Conservation District has a couple of challenging years to come. Roughly 65,000 acres of CRP is expiring, Crested Wheatgrass and associated grasshopper populations are expanding, and drought are impacting producers in McCone County. The Administration Grant funding would allow McCone CD additional funds to operate as well as the ability to use their reserve funds for education and cost share programs for producers of McCone County.

McCone CD is also looking at purchasing equipment that could assist producers in their county and without an administrative grant funds, it is difficult to have a financial reserve.

The McCone Conservation District employs:

- 1--Part time district administrator, working approximately 32 hours a week
- 6-Seasonal full-time employees, Working the Watercraft inspection station.

The McCone Conservation District functions mainly on grant funds. These grants are the Soil Health Grant and Aquatic Invasive Species and Watercraft Inspection Station funding. The McCone CD works with other conservation districts to conduct soil health workshops for education and soil acidity testing thru the soil health grant. The Aquatic Invasive Species grant helps protect Montana waters by augmenting the Watercraft Inspection Stations in conjunction with FWP.

McCone County faces many challenges this year and has worked hard to focus their conservation efforts into helping producers improve expiring CRP and Crested Wheatgrass stands. The district assisted NRCS in submitting a Targeted Implementation Plan to apply for other funding which would provide fence and water to better use pastures for grazing.

Explanation of the decision(s) that must be made regarding the proposed action (i.e.: approve grant or loan and provide funding)

DNRC will approve the grant to provide funding for the McCone Conservation District Administrative Grant.

DNRC is not required to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for actions that qualify for a CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION or justified by a PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW; or are ACTIONS OF A SPECIAL NATURE (ARM 36.2.523(5)). These actions are subject to review for EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES that would require an EA or an EIS.

ACTIONS OF SPECIAL NATURE (ARM 36.2.523)

- ☒ Administrative actions: routine, clerical or similar functions of a department, including but not limited to administrative procurement, contracts for consulting services, and personnel actions.
- ☐ Minor repairs, operations, or maintenance of existing equipment or facilities.
- ☐ Investigation and enforcement: data collection, inspection of facilities or enforcement of environmental standards.
- ☐ Ministerial actions: actions in which the agency exercises no discretion, but rather acts upon a given state of facts in a prescribed manner.
- ☒ Actions that are primarily social or economic in nature and that do not otherwise affect the human environment.

The project listed above meets the definition of Actions of a Special Nature, Categorical Exclusion or Programmatic Review including specified conditions and Extraordinary Circumstances.

Prepared By:	Name: Mary Hendrix	Date: 2/3/2022
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Approved By:	Name: Mark Bostrom
	Title: CARD Division Administrator
Signature:	<div><div><div>DocuSigned by:</div><div>Mark W Bostrom</div></div><div>BF7A1C50B2AF4DE...</div></div> Date: 2/22/2022 2:25:01 PM MST